

1974 to deliver 50,000 homes to the poorest of poor in Canada who live away from the conventional delivery systems of fuel and home heating oils in remote and northern areas of the country. It was known as the native and rural housing program and when it expired in 1979, it had delivered less than 3,000 homes instead of the 50,000. It failed miserably. In addition, many families in the north are having to leave their homes because they cannot cope with the incredibly high fuel costs which are not included in the blended payment that is being charged and which is indexed to their income.

What does the minister intend to do with this program? Is he going to revive it? Is he going to pay any attention to the poor people in the north and remote areas, or is he, like the Minister of National Health and Welfare, going to say that there really is not a housing crisis in this country, that it is just a rumour started by people who do not have a place to live?

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Hon. Paul J. Cosgrove (Minister of Public Works): Madam Speaker, with regard to the people the hon. member is concerned about, I would advise that yes, the program will continue. The program is being reviewed with a view to improving and increasing the amount of funds that are available to this particular segment. One of the objectives of the program and a very important aspect of it was to involve people in native and rural areas in the actual production of that type of housing. That has not been an easy task. The people who are involved in this delivery program are meeting with our officials, CMHC officials, and with officials of the ministry of Indian affairs. We are actively reviewing the program, which continues to have a high priority, indeed a higher priority with this government.

Mr. Oberle: Madam Speaker, in light of the death blow which has been dealt this program as a result of the budget, putting an extraordinary burden on people in northern areas who need more fuel and have no alternative but to drive their cars, will the minister give serious consideration to including in the blended payment figure, which is interest and all the other components of a house payment, a component for energy and other utilities? That is the only way these people will ever be able to live in a house. Also, will he undertake to negotiate with the provinces and territorial governments to improve on the delivery system, which has failed so miserably over the last five years?

Mr. Cosgrove: Those are two questions, Madam Speaker. I think I have already touched upon the question of delivery. We hope that through engaging these people in the actual production and delivery, and in education, in conjunction with the minister of manpower, that program will be improved. In so far as the allowance and how we calculate what benefits are available to people who fall under the native and rural program, I would first of all point out that in the budget provisions with regard to energy, there is already an \$800 credit for conversion. Those benefits are directed to areas which will

specifically impact on the group we are talking about. Secondly, yes, the program is under review.

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WOMEN

CANCELLATION OF PROGRAMS

Mr. Walter McLean (Waterloo): Madam Speaker my question is directed to the minister responsible for the status of women. It relates to the expectations which were raised in the throne speech in relation to women's programs and the statements made by the minister in this House and before women's groups. I draw the minister's attention to the fact that funding for 1980-81 for all women's programs through the Department of Secretary of State amounted to only \$700,000, compared to \$2.5 million in 1975. By comparison, I draw his attention to the fact that native peoples are funded to a level of \$25 million, multiculturalism \$6 million and bilingualism \$11 million. This lack of support for women has resulted in the cancelling of many programs.

In light of this devastating budget and its impact on women, why is the minister not putting money where his mouth has been?

Hon. Lloyd Axworthy (Minister of Employment and Immigration): Madam Speaker, I would like to correct some of the statements the hon. member has made. We in fact have been putting a large amount of money into new women's programs. We have just introduced a new program for the training of women in non-traditional work, which is becoming highly successful in providing major opportunities for women, and in developing employment opportunities in new areas. We took a very major step this summer when we introduced affirmative action principles into the federal public service. This is a major step in removing the barriers of discrimination, and we have put substantial resources of the government toward implementing that kind of program.

• (1450)

Furthermore, the hon. member was wrong in saying that there have been no increases. We have increased the amount of money going into the Outreach programs for women's employment, and additional resources have gone to the Department of the Secretary of State. I suggest that before the hon. member asks a question it would be helpful if he got the right facts.

Mr. McLean: Madam Speaker, the minister should communicate the facts to groups such as the National Action Committee, because we are talking about funds directed to women's groups across Canada and not about the other support mechanisms which are not in dispute. This minister is supposedly the champion of women's rights in terms of funding, and he cannot deliver in that regard. The minister has not been able to deliver in terms of the human rights package in the proposed constitution.